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## II.—SOME ARTHURIAN FRAGMENTS FROM FOURTEENTH CENTURY CHRONICLES.

### I. THE ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR IN THE *Cronicon Monasterii de Hales*.

The Chronicle of the Monastery of Hales<sup>1</sup> (in Gloucestershire) occupies the first fifty-six folios of ms. Cotton Cleopatra D. III, a manuscript written<sup>2</sup> in or soon after the year 1301, with which it originally ended. As is the case with scores of other Latin Chronicles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, its first part, the "Gesta Britonum," consists essentially of a condensation of Geoffry of Monmouth's *Historia*, with a few divergences.<sup>3</sup> It has no notable feature before the reign of Arthur.

This latter is very briefly and rather confusedly described,<sup>4</sup> from several sources. The writer takes from Nennius,<sup>5</sup> or some account derived from Nennius, his mention of Arthur's twelve victories. He says of Arthur, "anglos quotquot remanserunt tributarios fecit," a statement which also appears in the so-called Ickham Chronicle.<sup>6</sup> In connection with the death of Walwain, he mentions the discovery of his tomb, a story which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hardy, *Des. Cat. of Materials*, III, 352, No. 580.

<sup>2</sup> This is on the authority of H. A. Herbert, Esq., of the Department of MSS., British Museum, who has kindly aided me in deciphering the passage.

<sup>3</sup> It contains certain preliminary material; is confused in the story of the eponymous Brutus; agrees verbally with the chronicle ascribed to Peter Ickham (ms. Cott. Calig. A. x. 1, etc. See *Dict. Nat'l Biog.*, xxviii, 411) in a concluding sentence, foreign to Geoffrey's narrative, about Brenius, fol. 3 b (Calig. A. x. fol. 12 a); inserts a description of Ireland, fol. 3 b; and calls Hoel the son, instead of the nephew, of Loth and Anna, fol. 7 a. (Cf. Geoffrey viii. 21, and ix. 2.)

<sup>4</sup> Fols. 7 b-8 a.

<sup>5</sup> Section 56.

<sup>6</sup> Ms. Cott. Calig. A. x. fol. 20 a.

comes ultimately from William of Malmesbury,<sup>1</sup> though the event is here dated in the reign of William I. He quotes, without saying so, from Henry of Huntingdon's outline of Geoffrey's History in the letter to Warinus,<sup>2</sup> so that he represents that Arthur in person killed Modred.<sup>3</sup> He then pauses to speak of "Guenhevera's" flight, which Geoffrey<sup>4</sup> introduced earlier; after which he follows Geoffrey in mentioning Arthur's being carried to Avalon and leaving the kingdom to Constantine (only putting the date at 547 instead of 542.) Then he proceeds at once with the following remarkable passage.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gesta Reg.* iii, 287, ed. Stubbs, Rolls Ser., II, 342.

<sup>2</sup> Published in Chrons. of Stephen, etc., ed. Howlett, Rolls Ser., vol. IV, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> It is probable that this almost inevitable elaboration of Geoffrey's narrative (xi. 2) originated with Henry. Other chronicles and romances which include it, some of them drawing certainly from Henry, though without actually quoting his words, are: Brut Tysilio, San Marte's trans. in his ed. of "Gottfried v. Monmouth," p. 567; Benedict of Gloucester in his Life of St. Dubricius, ed. Wharton, Angl. Sac. II, 656 ff.; Robert of Gloucester, ed. W. A. Wright, Rolls Ser., vol. I, lines 4574-9; Langtoft, ed. T. Wright, Rolls Ser., vol. I, p. 222; the "Polistorie del Eglise de Christ de Caunterbyre" (see below), fol. 27 a; the very composite fourteenth century chronicle of MS. Cott. Cleop. A. I. 1, fol. 49 a (cf. Hardy, Des. Cat. III, 258, No. 466); Hardyng, ed. Ellis, 1812, p. 146; the chronicle of MS. Coll. Magdalen, Oxford, 72, No. 1 (cf. Hardy, Des. Cat. II, 472, No. 620), p. 48; Wavrin, Recueil, ed. W. Hardy, Rolls Ser., I, 445; the prose Lancelot, see P. Paris' very brief summary, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, v, 350; the Thornton *Morte Arthur*, ed. Perry, 1865, and again, Brock, 1871, E. E. T. S., lines 4228 ff.; the *Morte Arthur* of Harl. ms. 2252, ed. Furnivall, 1864, lines 3389 ff.; Malory, xxi, 4 (here resembling the Harl. *Morte Arthur*. See Sommer, *Morte Darthur*, III, 269); the Dutch metrical *Roman van Lancelot*, ed. W. Jonckbloet, p. 267, lines 11885-11916; Ulrich Füeteler (von Zatzikhoven) *Prosaroman von Lancelot*, ed. Peter, pp. 356-7. The Magdalen Coll. ms. version and all the others here named after it, except the last, are like the prose *Lancelot*, and unlike Henry of Huntingdon, in that they represent Arthur as piercing (not hewing down) Modred, and Modred as giving Arthur his fatal wound. In all except the Thornton ms., the piercing is with a spear, there with a sword.

<sup>4</sup> xi, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Beginning about the middle of fol. 7 b.

Igitur finito prelii certamine clipeo innitens post fatigacionem refrigerandi gratia humi resedit. residens quatuor ex sue gentis primatibus accersiu it ut accersitis iubet ut seipsum armis diligenter exhonerent : ne forte incaucius agentes recencium uulnerum dolori cumulent dolorem . Rege ergo exarmato ecce quidam adolescens pulcher aspectu statura procerus carpebat iter egri tergo insidens dextram uirga hulmea habens munitam . que rigida erat non torta neque nodosa sed plana et cuspidi acuta admodum lancee sed plus lancea ad nocendum acucior ' et uipereo infecta ueneno ut quod forte iaculata minus noceret pro iaculantis defectu uirium. virus suppleret. Hic magnanimus adolescens per regem transiens tale iaculum iaculatur in regem et ipsius uulneribus grauibz uulnus apposuit grauius. Quo facto fugit concitus : sed non effugit longius. Quem equidem rex more impaciens ut miles strenuus hastam uibrans in tergum figit fugientis : et penetralia cordis transfixit et mox spiritum exalauit in talem. Denique rex parumper melioracioni restitutus iubet se transuehi ad uenedociam ad quam ubi peruentum est : medici pro sue artis industria . pro regis sunt solliciti uulneribus. sed rex eorum sollicitudinis nullam salubriam persensit efficaciam. Ob quod ipse de uite remedio desperatus episcopos insule tocus ad se mandauit uenire. Hiis ergo presentibus sue christiane professionis confitetur excessus seque creatoris obsequio reddidit obnoxium. Hiis ita pactis more ecclesiastico dominica consecutus sacramenta seculo nequam ualefecit extremum. Igitur prefati episcopi ceterique regium corpus componunt regio more balsamo et mirra condiunt et preparant sepulture commendantes ¶ Dieque sequenti corpus regis defuncti ad quandam paruam deferunt ecclesiam in honore sancte dei genetricis marie dedicatam sicut uiuens ipse deuouerat . Sed postquam ad prefate capelle peruentum est hostium breuis et angustus aditus ingentis corporis glebe prohibebat ingressum . Ob quod foris iuxta parietem feretro subportatus sortitus est mansionem : cogente causa necessitatis. Interim episcopis celebrantibus exequias aer tonat. terra mutat. desuper crebro irruunt tem-

pestates. fulgura choruscant ' aureque diuise variis se alternant uicibus . Demum interposita breuissimi temporis morula aeris subsecuta est caligo . que fulgurum absorta est claritatem et tanta cecitate regii corporis obuoluit custodes ut apertis oculis uix uiderent Hoc ab hora tertia usque ad nonam perdurat assidue At deinde cum caligo subducitur et serenitas restituitur corporis regii ultimas repperunt reliquias. Rex enim raptus est ad paratam suam mansionem. feretrumque conspiciunt commendato fraudatum. Quod propter quidam dicunt quod uiuus est adhuc et sanus et incolumis quia illis nescientibus raptus est. Quorum temere opinioni nonnulli contradicunt sine dubietis scrupulo affirmantes illum mortis persoluisse debitum. tali innitentes argumento. Quia cum pretacta fuit sublata caligo et claritas reuersa tumba ferata apparuit presencium obtucibus et solide firmata et vnica ut pocius tota petra uideretur integra et solida ' et una quam due . In cuius claustris regem opinantur contineri : cum eam compactam ita inuenerunt et vnica. Cuius sepulchrum apud glastoniam ubi ut dictum est sepeliebatur tempore regis Ricardi cruce plumbea super pectus nomen eius inscriptum declarante repertum est. Triginta et nouem annis uirtutum potencia atque sapientia ' discretionis prudencia bellorum gloria imperium britannie gubernauit. Anno a regni ipsius. x1<sup>o</sup> humane condicionis est sortitus Dominum. *De quo uersus.*

Rex fuit arthurus. rex est post regna futurus.  
 Prelia facturus . vincet. numquam periturus .  
 Hic orbem rexit. Sed christus ad ethera uexit :  
 Regem tam fortem nec sensit corpore mortem.  
 Enoch translatus legimus super astra leuatum .  
 Ethereasque uias : curru penetrauit helias.  
 Isti pugnabunt. cum hostem non superabunt.  
 Sed magis arthurus prudens ad prelia durus.  
 Leuiathan feriet : et ei uictoria fiet.

As far as I know, this passage is altogether unlike anything which is elsewhere connected with Arthur. Almost all the

other accounts of Arthur's end which speak of him at any length after the battle—that of Layamon,<sup>1</sup> the two given by Wavrin, those of the Harleian ms. *Morte Arthur*, of Malory, and of the Dutch romances<sup>2</sup>—while they all differ very considerably in details from that of the prose Lancelot, resemble it at least in a general way. But the only points of contact between the versions of the present manuscript and of the Lancelot seem to be: that here Arthur is said to command four of his knights to disarm him, while there it is stated that at noon, from the original one hundred thousand combatants of the two hosts there remained alive only three hundred, among them four of the Round Table, namely, Arthur, Lucans, Girflet, and Sagremors; that here Arthur is taken to a chapel for burial, while there he is carried still alive to the “chappelle noire,” where later his tomb is found by Girflet; that in both accounts, the tomb and its appearance are prominent; and lastly, that here the lack of witnesses to Arthur's actual interment is made the explanation of the (Britons') belief that he is not dead, while in the Lancelot there is a survival of the same idea in that none of Arthur's men, but the hermit alone, witness his burial. The present story has rather more similarity with that of the Thornton ms. *Morte Arthur*, where, after Arthur and his men have gone to “Glasschenberye” and entered a manor in the “Ile of Aveloyne,” a surgeon searches his wounds; he sends for a confessor;<sup>3</sup> dies, as here, quite naturally, in the presence of his men, with no mention of any boat or mysterious ladies such as figure in the other accounts; and is buried at “Glaschenbery” with stately rites by “the baronage of Bretayne, bechopes and othire.”

The influence exercised upon the present author, or his

<sup>1</sup> Lines 28587–28651, ed. Madden.

<sup>2</sup> Obviously no notice need be taken in this connection of Geoffrey's *Vita Merlini*, ed. Michel and Wright, 1837, p. 37; nor of the *Draco Normannicus*, ed. Howlett in *Chron. of Reigns of Stephen, etc.*, Rolls Ser., vol. II, p. 703.

<sup>3</sup> Wavrin also mentions his confession.

source, by the Gospel narrative of the death and resurrection of Christ, is obvious. The thunder storm reminds one of those often associated in Norse and other mediæval tales with the birth of heroes, as, for instance, Helgi.<sup>1</sup> The mention of the discovery of Arthur's tomb at Glastonbury, with the details, was a commonplace of the story after the time of Henry II, based on the actual fact diversely described by Giraldus Cambrensis<sup>2</sup> and the author of the Coggeshall Chronicle,<sup>3</sup> and from them by other historians. Its introduction into the present narrative, however, gives rise to an inconsistency, as Glastonbury certainly is not situated in Venedotia (North Wales). The author seems to be conscious of this difficulty and to try to overcome it by contradicting himself with his parenthetical "ut dictum est." There is no apparent connection between the concluding verses and the "Draco Normannicus."

## II. GAWAYN'S SWORD IN THE *Polistorie del Eglise de Christ de Caunterbyre*.

This chronicle extends from Brutus to the year 1313.<sup>4</sup> For the most part it follows Geoffrey's *Historia*, as far as that continues, rather closely, sometimes almost as a literal translation, though sometimes with a slight omission or amplification. Its chief divergences occur in the latter part of Geoffrey's narrative, after Arthur's coronation feast;<sup>5</sup> especially in the account of the campaign against Modred, where it has some points of contact with the famous French Brut,

<sup>1</sup> Helgakviða I, Hildebrand's *Altare Edda*, p. 150. Cf. Bugge, trans. by Schofield, *The Home of the Eddic Poems*, 1899, pp. 72 and 79-87.

<sup>2</sup> De Prin. Instruct., Rolls ed. of Giraldus, vol. viii, ed. G. F. Warren, pp. 126-9, and Spec. Eccles. ii, 9, vol. iv, ed. J. S. Brewer, pp. 47-51.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. Jos. Stevenson, Rolls Ser., p. 203.

<sup>4</sup> It has been described by G. Paris, *Hist. lit. de la France*, xxviii, 480-486. See also Hardy, Des. Cat. iii, 350, no. 576. The ms. is Harl. 636.

<sup>5</sup> Fols. 21 ff. Geof. ix, 14 ff.

such, for instance, as the mention of the ports of Whitsand and Sandwich.<sup>1</sup>

In describing the retreat of Gawayn and Arthur's other envoys from the camp of Lucius, it inserts,<sup>2</sup> drawing directly or ultimately, but in all events closely, from Wace,<sup>3</sup> who apparently invented the incident, the account of the death of a fifth Roman at Gawayn's hands. Then it proceeds, from no apparent known source: Kar a peyne hi auoit nus hums ke poeyt le cop gauweyn rester. taunt estoyt querous e fort e lespee auoyt a volunte. si auoyt vne escripture en cel espee en cest paroles.<sup>4</sup>

Jeo su forte *trenchaute* e dure.  
 gaban me fist. per mult graunt cure.  
 xiiii. anns auoyt ihesu crist.  
 kaunt galan<sup>5</sup> me *trempe* e fist.  
 Sage feloun deyt em doter.  
 e fol felun eschuer.  
 fol deboneire deporter.<sup>6</sup>  
 e sager deboneyre *amer*.

In later parts of the story Geoffrey's praise of Gawayn is expanded.

The similarity of the figure of Gaban in this passage to Wayland the Smith and Layamon's Wygar<sup>7</sup> and Griffin,<sup>8</sup> is evident. It is possible, until the contrary is proved, that the verses came directly or indirectly from the Münchener Brut or some other lost metrical version of Geoffrey.

<sup>1</sup> Fol. 26 b.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. 24a2.

<sup>3</sup> Lines 12262-79, ed. de Lincy.

<sup>4</sup> The following lines are not written as poetry. The words here italicized have been corrected by a scribe (perhaps the original one) who made many changes in the manuscript.

<sup>5</sup> The *l* here was originally *b*.

<sup>6</sup> Query, for deyt porter? There is a mark under the *de* which seems to belong to the next line.

<sup>7</sup> Line 21133.

<sup>8</sup> Line 23784.



## III. DID LAYAMON MAKE ANY USE OF GEOFFREY'S HISTORIA ?

Many years ago, in an article on Layamon's sources,<sup>1</sup> Professor Wülker argued that Layamon made no use of Geoffrey's *Historia*. This conclusion must still be admitted to be very likely correct. Professor Wülker amply illustrated the fact that in most of the cases where Wace differs from Geoffrey, Layamon follows Wace, and showed<sup>2</sup> that a few instances which might seem to indicate influence by Geoffrey upon Layamon can most reasonably be explained away. Moreover, it seems nearly certain that if Layamon had drawn directly from Geoffrey's *History*, he would have named it among his sources in his introductory lines, unless—what does not appear very probable—he thought, or believed his readers would think, that it was too untrustworthy. No harm will be done, however, by pointing out that there is a little evidence looking in the contrary direction from all this.

First, in a few episodes not noticed by Wülker, certain of Layamon's details agree with those of Geoffrey and not with those of Wace.<sup>3</sup> Without doubt, no great stress ought to be laid on these coincidences. They are few, and may be due to chance; if they did come to Layamon from Geoffrey, it may have been indirectly; allowance must be made for the possibilities of corruptions in the manuscripts of all three authors; the existing edition of Wace is certainly very faulty; and conceivably Layamon may have had a manuscript of Wace copied by a scribe who altered it occasionally by comparison with Geoffrey—which hypothesis, however, really begs the question. The coincidences are as follows :

<sup>1</sup> Paul u. Braune's *Beiträge*, 1876, III, 524–555.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 541–2.

<sup>3</sup> I have examined carefully only that part of the story included between the accession of Constantine, Arthur's grandfather, and the disappearance of Arthur.

In the first part of the story of Vortigern's tower, both Geoffrey and Layamon, but not Wace, say that the messengers were weary when they arrived at Merlin's city,<sup>1</sup> and represent Merlin's mother as speaking of the maidens in her chamber and of the beauty of the youth who came to her.<sup>2</sup>

Layamon, like Geoffrey, implies decidedly that Aurelius did not know of Merlin until Tremorien mentioned him, while Wace's language does not convey that impression;<sup>3</sup> Layamon and Geoffrey say that Aurelius sent messengers for him all over the kingdom, while Wace represented that he sent at once to the right place; and Layamon and Geoffrey agree that Merlin often frequented or bathed in his favorite fountain, while Wace observes instead that he does not know where it is.<sup>4</sup>

Both Geoffrey and Layamon state that when Gorlois was killed he had sallied out of the castle, while Wace strongly implies the contrary.<sup>5</sup>

Geoffrey says that in ascending the hill at the battle of Badon, Arthur lost many of his men, and Layamon that he lost five hundred, while Wace does not speak of any loss at all.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G., vi, 17. 15 (references to book, chapter, and line of San Marte's ed.); W., 7549; L., 15556.

<sup>2</sup> G., vi, 18. 11; W., 7607; L., 15702-12.

<sup>3</sup> G., viii, 10. 5 ff.; W., 8207 ff.; L., 16989 ff.

<sup>4</sup> G., lines 11-14; W., 8217-20; L., 17017-18.

<sup>5</sup> G., viii, 20. 4; W., 8980; L., 19136-7. But the printed text of Wace reads:

Et li quens fort se desfendi,  
Mais au desfendre fu ocis;

and corruption of *descendre* into *desfendre* would be very easy.

<sup>6</sup> G., ix, 4. 29; W., 9580 ff.; L., 21368. Madden was certainly right in suggesting that the names of Arthur's shield and spear, Pridwen and Ron, which appear at this point in Geoffrey and Layamon, but not in the printed text of Wace, were really included by the latter. They occur in two mss. of his works that I have examined, Cott. Vitell., A, x, fol. 81 b 1, and Harl. 6508. Also the printed text of Wace does not call Iny, Cadwalader's nephew, as do Geoffrey and Layamon (G., xii, 18. 7; W., 15254: L., 32139); but the statement appears in ms. Vitell., A, x, fol. 115 b 1.

In the second place are to be considered Layamon's citations of prophecies of Merlin. Wace did not include the version of the prophecies which occupies Geoffrey's seventh book, because, he said,<sup>1</sup> he did not know what they meant; and elsewhere he mentions Merlin's prophecies only twice, saying, after Geoffrey,<sup>2</sup> that Merlin had foretold that Arthur's end would be doubtful, and again, not drawing directly from Geoffrey, that the Britons could not regain the island until the time that Merlin had foretold.<sup>3</sup> Layamon, on the other hand, gives several prophecies which he ascribes to Merlin. Wülker said<sup>4</sup> that he probably based them on popular tradition current among the Welsh independently of Geoffrey. But the assumption that Merlin had been connected with the Arthurian story by any one before Geoffrey, or that any one before Geoffrey had ascribed to him prophecies corresponding very closely with those of Geoffrey's seventh book, seems to me dangerous.<sup>5</sup> And it is to be noted that all the bits which Layamon cites either (1) correspond entirely with passages of Geoffrey's version,<sup>6</sup> or else (2) agree similarly with Wace or fit (as was, indeed, to be expected) very naturally to the story, so that, in the latter case, they may easily have been composed with direct reference to it after the appearance of Geoffrey's History. Obviously, however, those which belong to the second class afford no evidence of direct knowledge of Geoffrey on the part of Layamon; and it may still be argued that those which belong to the first class had passed from Geoffrey's History into popular lore, or that Layamon had only Geoffrey's seventh book, which, as existing manuscripts show, sometimes circulated by itself without the rest of the work. But the second of these assumptions would practically surrender the

<sup>1</sup> 7733-4.<sup>2</sup> G., vii, 3. 20; W., 13691-2.<sup>3</sup> 15227-9.<sup>4</sup> p. 543.<sup>5</sup> I expect soon to call attention elsewhere to facts which lend some support to the doubt.<sup>6</sup> As Wülker pointed out for those which he mentioned.

argument, and the first is no more probable in itself than that Layamon drew directly from Geoffrey.

The prophecies in Layamon which correspond closely to passages in Geoffrey are these: 27106–11. *þa waes mid soðe ifunde, þat Maerlin saeide whilen, þat sculden for Ardure, Rome ifullen afure, and þa wal of stanen, quakien and fallen.* This is also repeated less at length in 27978–81. Geoffrey vii. 3. 19: *Timebit Romulea domus ipsius saevitiam.* 28452–4. *Ærm wurðest þu Winchæstre, þæ eorðe þe scal forswalþe. swa Merlin sæide.* Geoffrey vii. 4.24. *dic Guyn-toniaie, absorbebit te tellus.*

Layamon's statement<sup>1</sup> that Cadwalader said that Merlin foretold about his death and his great sorrow seems to be only a variant of the rendering which he has made<sup>2</sup> of the statement, above referred to, of Wace, that Merlin predicted the time when the Britons should regain their land—a passage which certainly may as well have been invented after the publication of Geoffrey's History as before. The other prophecies which Layamon puts into Merlin's mouth are the quaint one about Arthur's glory at the time of Uther's affair with Ygerna,<sup>3</sup> repeated in part later, with variations;<sup>4</sup> and the statements that Arthur's death should be the cause of much sorrow,<sup>5</sup> and that Arthur shall yet come to help the Britons.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 32178–81.

<sup>2</sup> 32090–93.

<sup>3</sup> 18847 ff.

<sup>4</sup> 23027 ff.

<sup>5</sup> 28632.

<sup>6</sup> 28648–51. A text reads erroneously, "Anglen."